

405 Eleventh St. (Commercial Building)
(Universal Newsstand)
Washington
District of Columbia

HABS No. DC -475

HABS
DC,
WASH,
259-

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240

STATE District Of Columbia	COUNTY	TOWN OR VICINITY Washington
HISTORIC NAME OF STRUCTURE (INCLUDE SOURCE FOR NAME) 405 Eleventh St. (Commercial Building)		HABS NO. DC-475
SECONDARY OR COMMON NAMES OF STRUCTURE Universal News Stand		
COMPLETE ADDRESS (DESCRIBE LOCATION FOR RURAL SITES) 405 Eleventh Street, N.W., Washington, D.C., Square 348, Lot 821.		
DATE OF CONSTRUCTION (INCLUDE SOURCE) c.1853 (see attached sheet)	ARCHITECT(S) (INCLUDE SOURCE) unknown	
SIGNIFICANCE (ARCHITECTURAL AND HISTORICAL, INCLUDE ORIGINAL USE OF STRUCTURE) This Romanesque Revival facade features arched windows at the third story and an enriched cornice. It is part of a generally cohesive row of mid-19th Century commercial buildings and is located in the Pennsylvania Avenue Historic District.		
STYLE (IF APPROPRIATE) Romanesque Revival (commercial)		
MATERIAL OF CONSTRUCTION (INCLUDE STRUCTURAL SYSTEMS) The facade is of pressed brick with trims of rough-faced stone and cast iron. The structural system is comprised of brick bearing walls and wooden floor joists.		
SHAPE AND DIMENSIONS OF STRUCTURE (SKETCHED FLOOR PLANS ON SEPARATE PAGES ARE ACCEPTABLE) 405 Eleventh Street is three stories tall with four bays. It is rectangular in shape and measures 25' x 71'. (see also interior features).		
EXTERIOR FEATURES OF NOTE 405 Eleventh Street is a three-story, four-bay wide brick building. The first floor storefront has a centered double steel and glass door, and two steel and glass show windows. A rectangular plastic sign extends the width of the storefront. The second story has three very large two-over-two windows centered on the facade. (see attached sheet).		
INTERIOR FEATURES OF NOTE (DESCRIBE FLOOR PLANS, IF NOT SKETCHED) The first floor of 405 Eleventh Street is a large open space with bookshelves on both the north and south walls; a counter is located at the south of the centered entrance. A small office and store room is located behind a north-south wall. The third and fourth floors are fully open spaces with two small rooms in the north-east corner of the building.		
MAJOR ALTERATIONS AND ADDITIONS WITH DATES Building Permits cited include the Following: (see attached sheet)		
PRESENT CONDITION AND USE The first floor of the structure is used as a news/magazine shop. Upper floors are vacant. Neither the exterior or interior show serious deterioration.		
OTHER INFORMATION AS APPROPRIATE Entrance to upper floors is gained through street level entrance at 401 Eleventh Street. See also DC-493 (SQUARE 348) for additional information.		
SOURCES OF INFORMATION (INCLUDE LISTING ON NATIONAL REGISTER, STATE REGISTERS, ETC.) District of Columbia Recorder of Deeds; District of Columbia Building Permits, General Assessment Records and Tax Records, National Archives; Baist's Atlas of Washington, Martin Luther King Library, Washingtoniana Room, Washington, D.C.		
COMPILER, AFFILIATION W.F. Hunter, Pennsylvania Avenue Development Corporation		DATE February 1981

Dates of Construction (cont'd)

Due to construction of this building prior to 1870, there are no original building permits for precise dating. The District of Columbia Tax Records show a marked increase in the improvement value on the lot between 1844 and 1853 (1844-lot \$375 no improvements are noted; 1853-lot \$625 improvements \$3500). The improvement value for 1853 is noted in red indicating new construction. The value remains relatively stable, with increases that could indicate construction of additions.

Exterior Features of Note (cont'd)

They are separated by brick mullions.

Above these windows is a string-course that doubles as sills for the round-head arched third story windows. A set of four molded brick arches cap the window arches.

A corbelled cornice line and denticulation in the bed molding result in a richly ornamented entablature.

An iron fire escape extends from the third story south (right) to the second story left.

Major Alterations and Additions With Dates (cont'd)

- 10/28/78 #1511 - (illegible) to lower...
- 5/3/79 #2213 - general repairs and expand back building.
- 10/23/12 #766½ - brace third floor for press weight of about 9000 lbs., to ground floor.
- 8/30/26 #2291 - galvanized iron marquis reinforced with angles will be erected over entrance to new restaurant; 4'6" projection.
- 2/28/44 #267030 - cover walls with sheet rock; lower ceiling and cover same with sheet rock; new floor over present floor; Contractor A. Eberly's Sons, Inc.
- 11/4/44 #273741 - replace four windows third floor, Contractor William M. Ernst.
- 2/27/48 #303470 - remove raised floor of show window and enclose back of same; Architect J.R. Harrison, Contractor L.B. Waller and Co.
- 5/4/49 #317806 - alter side store window inside, no structural change; Architect Herbert Manucoin, Contractor Stewart Kelly.
- 5/4/49 #317807 - replace existing wood door and frame with aluminum door and frame; Design by U.S. Cigar/Whelan Corp. (owner), Contractor David Max Co.
- 3/17/52 #A28809 - repair fire damage, on roof; Contractor Cladney.
- 4/25/52 #A30485 - repair fire damage, reinforce first floor joists; Architect Edward Dreyfus.
- 10/24/52 #A38132 - provide partitions for enclosing kitchens and make minor repairs on second floor; Builder A. Michaels.